

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

□ 1445

EXTENDING CHAPTER 12 OF THE BANKRUPTCY CODE FOR 9 MONTHS

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1606) to extend for 9 additional months the period for which chapter 2 of title 11, United States Code, is reenacted.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1606

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS.

Section 149 of title I of division C of Public Law 105-277, as amended by Public Law 106-5, is amended—

(1) by striking "October 1, 1999" each place it appears and inserting "July 1, 2000"; and

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking "March 31, 1999" and inserting "September 30, 1999"; and

(B) by striking "April 1, 1999" and inserting "October 1, 1999".

SEC. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by section 1 shall take effect on October 1, 1999.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS) and the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the Senate bill, S. 1606.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the record is complete on the necessity for the passage of this bill because only last week we gave the rationale for the need for quick action on this piece of legislation.

On October 1, the authority for family farmers to file for bankruptcy under Chapter 12, a separate and unique set of provisions to accommodate the special and unique needs of farmers in distress, ran out of authority.

It had been extended over a period of time in temporary chunks of time because, in reality, the bankruptcy reform movement has encompassed Chapter 12, the special provisions, and included in them a comprehensive bankruptcy reform in which this special set of provisions, as I have stated, will become permanent. We would not have to ever return to the well of the

House to seek an extension of these benefits.

Now, we are in a position where the Senate acted in a little different way from the way we had on the number of months of extension. The current form, the one that is before us now, the Senate version extends that period from October 1 for 9 months. That is why we are here.

The bill that we passed was less than 9 months. The Senate made it 9 months. We will concur in the Senate amendment and, thus, ask for passage of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it feels like *deja vu* all over again. Just 1 week ago, I was on the floor reluctantly supporting a 3-month extension of the Chapter 12 bankruptcy title for family farmers. I did not particularly like last week's bill because it would have allowed Chapter 12 to expire so soon, on January 1, the year 2000.

I knew that Congress would have to come back again this session before we adjourned for the year to ensure that the bankruptcy protection in the form of Chapter 12 was continued. But I supported it because, otherwise, Chapter 12 would have expired on October 1, last Friday.

Well, guess what? Chapter 12 did expire last Friday. That means that, if a family farmer in my State of Wisconsin or, for that matter, anywhere in the United States needs the protection of Chapter 12 today, they do not have it. The law has expired.

The other body realized that a 3-month extension that this House approved was not prudent and passed a 9-month extension that we have before us today.

So once again, I come to the floor wishing we were doing a little more to provide a safety net for our family farmers. While this bill provides a 9-month extension of Chapter 12 bankruptcy protection for family farmers, it still does not give our family farmers a permanent law on which they can rely to protect their farm in the most dire economic circumstances.

I ask the Republican leadership to stop holding family farmers hostage to negotiations with the other body on other matters. The family farmers I represent need the help of this Congress more than the bankers and the credit card corporations on whose behalf we delay making Chapter 12 a permanent part of our Federal code.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1606.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof)

the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

U.S. HOLOCAUST ASSETS COMMISSION EXTENSION ACT OF 1999

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H. R. 2401) to amend the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998 to extend the period by which the final report is due and to authorize additional funding.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2401

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Extension Act of 1999".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO THE U.S. HOLOCAUST ASSETS COMMISSION ACT OF 1998.

(a) EXTENSION OF TIME FOR FINAL REPORT.—Section 3(d)(1) of the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 1621 nt.) is amended by striking "December 31, 1999" and inserting "December 31, 2000".

(b) REAUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 9 of the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 1621 nt.) is amended—

(1) by striking "\$3,500,000" and inserting "\$6,000,000"; and

(2) by striking "1999, and 2000," and inserting "1999, 2000, and 2001."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAZIO) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAZIO).

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Extension Act of 1999. This bill amends the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998 to extend the life of the commission for 1 year and authorize it to receive additional funding. As a member of the commission, I can say with confidence that this is a bill that ought to be passed unanimously.

Mr. Speaker, the horrors of the Holocaust are well known, 6 million Jews murdered, along with millions of others deemed undesirable by Adolph Hitler and his followers. What many do not now, however, is that the Holocaust was also the single largest organized theft in history. The Nazis stole, plundered, and looted billions of dollars of assets. A half century later, we are still looking for full accounting.

Though we can never right all the monstrous wrongs that took place during the Holocaust, we have an obligation to find out what happened. We have an obligation to do what we can to bring a measure of justice to the victims of the Holocaust and their families.

In some cases, justice can, indeed, be done. This past summer, for example,

"The Seamstress," a painting by Lesser Ury, was turned over to Michael Loewenthal, whose grandparents were murdered during the Holocaust.

It turns out that a friend of Mr. Loewenthal's spotted the painting hanging in a museum in Linz, Austria, and realized it had once been part of the Loewenthal family collection. When Mr. Loewenthal learned of the painting's location, he contacted the New York State Holocaust Claims Restitution Office in New York City, which initiated negotiations on behalf of the Loewenthal family. Eventually the Linz City Council voted unanimously to return the painting.

When he received the painting in July, Mr. Loewenthal was overjoyed. He called the returned painting "absolutely fantastic, the only link that I have to my grandparents."

But for every story like this one, Mr. Speaker, there are hundreds of thousands of stories without happy endings. In recognition of this sad fact, 17 nations have established Holocaust historical commissions to investigate the extent to which its property was handled, or mishandled, by their countries.

I am proud to say that the United States has been one of the leaders of this movement. As part of this effort, Congress created the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States, a commission on which I serve.

This commission was given two tasks: one, to find out what happened to the assets of Holocaust victims that came into the possession of our Government; and, two, to issue a report to the President recommending action necessary to do justice.

While this mission might sound simple, it is anything but. The commission has found more than 75 separate United States Government agencies through which assets of Holocaust victims may have passed, many more entities than was generally thought. The records of each of these offices must first be located and then scoured page by page at the National Archives and other record centers across the United States.

Additionally, the Federal Government is in the process of declassifying millions of pages of World War II era information that may shine additional light on policies and procedures at that time. In total, the Commission will need to examine more than 45 million pages of documents if it is to carry out its mandate.

□ 1500

Members of the Holocaust Assets Commission were named only last November, and the Commission began its work just 10 months ago. Given the enormous volume of material that needs to be examined, and the tremendous importance of being thorough, the Commission needs another year to accomplish its tasks. And I think by citing the sheer volume, Mr. Speaker, of materials that have to be evaluated, we can understand why. This is why my-

self and my colleagues on the Commission, including the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN); the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MALONEY); and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) introduced the Holocaust Assets Commission Extension Act along with the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH), the chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services and a man who has led the way on this issue; and as well, my friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE), the ranking member on the full panel. This measure simply extends the sunset date of the Commission to December 2000 and authorizes it to receive additional funding.

The effort to create the Holocaust Assets Commission last year was a bipartisan one, and the effort to extend its life is as well. There are no partisan differences when it comes to honoring the memories of victims of the Holocaust and pursuing justice in their names. It is in that spirit that I urge every Member of this House to vote for this bill and, thereby, help the Holocaust Assets Commission complete its important work.

Mr. Speaker, Holocaust survivors are aging and dying, and if we are ever to do justice to them and the memory of the millions who perished at the hands of the Nazis, we must act quickly. In this case, justice delayed is, in fact, justice denied. And with the end of the Cold War, as we have the opportunity to look at the immediate post-World War II period with fresh perspective, we know that additional work needs to be done quickly.

We know that in Europe banks sat on dormant accounts for five decades. We know that insurance companies failed to honor policies held by Holocaust victims. We know that unscrupulous art dealers sold paintings that were expropriated from Jews who feared for their lives. We know that gold from Holocaust victims was resmelted, often becoming the basis for financial dealings between large corporate entities. And now each one of these contemptible practices demands a full investigation, daunting as the task may be.

The noted poet and philosopher George Santayana observed that, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." But the truth must be established before it can be remembered. That is why we created the United States Holocaust Assets Commission, and that is why the life of the Commission must be extended. Given the necessary time and funds, I am confident that the United States Holocaust Assets Commission will establish that America is doing all it can to return all manner of assets to their rightful owners. In so doing, we will confirm our leadership in the international effort to obtain justice for the victims of the Holocaust and their families.

Finally, once again, Mr. Speaker, I want to applaud the efforts of the full panel chairman, the gentleman from

Iowa (Mr. LEACH), for conducting hearings and his tenacity in seeking justice.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAFALCE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. LAFALCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2401, a bill that would extend the life of a commission charged with the important responsibility of recommending to the President the appropriate course of action on the recovery of Holocaust-era assets to their rightful heirs.

We have had a number of committee hearings and have learned from those hearings that the more we exhume the horrors of the Holocaust, the more we learn about the need to do more to redress the wrongs of the past. The harder we work to provide restitution to aggrieved victims of that period, the more legitimacy we add to victims' claims and the further along we move in the path toward preventing these horrible events from ever occurring again.

The bill we take up today extends the life of the United States Holocaust Assets Commission and authorizes additional needed resources to complete the daunting tasks the Commission is currently undertaking. As we have learned from our committee hearings, the challenges of achieving just compensation for Holocaust victims are significant.

For one thing, no amount of money can undo the injustices and horrors suffered by Holocaust victims. But in the ongoing effort to achieve justice and to render accountable those who committed crimes against humanity, we have become aware of very difficult legal and logistical challenges in bringing about a meaningful process to compensate those victims. For example, existing documentation is often sketchy, misleading, incomplete, or anecdotal, which makes it difficult to arrive at a full and complete historical record. But, Mr. Speaker, the need to reach meaningful conclusions as to how best to compensate Holocaust victims fully justifies the extension of the Commission's life and the authorization for additional funds.

Let me also point out that under the very able leadership of Deputy Treasury Secretary Stuart Eizenstat worldwide Jewish organizations, the German government, and a group of German companies will meet this week in Washington in an effort to agree on a just level of compensation for victims of forced labor during the Holocaust. The chairman of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH), and I recently wrote German Chancellor's special representative on these matters to urge just compensation and utmost generosity and expeditiousness, particularly given the advanced age of so

many victims of forced labor. We are united in full support of Mr. Eizenstat on this process, and we want everyone who will be coming to the table this Wednesday to know and understand that. And I hope it will yield the best results for victims.

Mr. Speaker, the difficulties faced in the process of compensating victims of forced labor only exemplifies the importance of our full support for organizations such as the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission. I therefore urge each and every one of my colleagues to support H.R. 2401.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO).

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this 1-year extension of the Holocaust Assets Commission and the important work that it is engaged in.

I think of the events that have occurred in this century, and certainly the Holocaust stands out as one of the most shameful in human history and certainly in this century. As the philosopher said, it demonstrates man's inhumanity to man.

And clearly, with the Commission's work and the cooperation that has been achieved on a global basis, I think that the attempt here to try and restore the property, the gold, the financial assets and arts and cultural property, and, of course, the new issue that has arisen, the whole issue of slave labor by these individuals that were subjected to such horrific treatment during that era in our history is being addressed.

I think these are very complex issues and clearly the responsibility lies with that face of industry as well as with the countries that are involved, but it obviously has roots that move well beyond Germany and into other countries where financial arrangements and indifference, to some extent, permitted this to work in all of its horror.

So I think that the additional year that is provided here will help us. It has been said before, but it can be said again, that we cannot put this behind us until it is all in front of us. And clearly those that have the most experience and who experienced these tragic circumstances, we are losing them. But the living history that they have provided and the insights, I think, are very much honored by the effort of this Commission and the global effort to try to rectify in some small way the trespasses that occurred in this century of human history.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Once again I would ask, based on the bipartisan support that we have for 2401, and in the interest of justice, that we move this ahead with the approval on the part of the House.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2401, amending the U.S. Holocaust Assets

Commission Act of 1998 extending the period by which the final report is due and to authorize additional funding. I have strongly supported efforts to compensate Holocaust survivors since Edgar Bronfman and Israel Singer of the World Jewish Restitution Organization first informed me of the issue of unclaimed communal property in Eastern Europe in 1995.

Since then, our State Department and organizations such as the World Jewish Restitution Organization, an umbrella group for a number of major Jewish organizations both here in the U.S. and abroad, have worked to further that goal. Under their leadership, progress has been made; however that progress has been slow due to the complexity of the issues among many different governments, companies, banks, and individuals.

I was a cosponsor of the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998, which was a landmark in efforts to make progress in the area of compensation for Holocaust victims.

It is unfortunate that, though the legislation which created the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission was signed into law by President Clinton back in July of 1998, the first meeting of this Commission did not take place until March of 1999, nine months later. At that first meeting I expressed my belief that the December 31st reporting deadline provided insufficient time to tackle the various issues required by the legislation, and that extending the life of the Commission was an absolute necessity.

We in the Congress must recognize the grave responsibility which our nation has to the Holocaust survivors and their families, many of whom are American citizens, and treat the issue of Holocaust era assets as a high priority, encouraging other governments to do the same. In order to do this, it is necessary to allow additional time for the Commission to conduct essential research on the collection and disposition of these Holocaust-era assets.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2401, legislation that would extend the authorization for the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets through December 21, 2000. As a cosponsor of this bill, I am pleased that Congress will be acting in time to ensure that this important Commission has both the resources and additional time it needs to complete its investigation and present a report to Congress.

Under current law, the authorization for this Commission would expire on December 31, 1999. Imposition of this deadline would mean that the Commission has sufficient time to comply with all of its archival information and prepare a report to Congress on the disposition of Holocaust assets that came into the possession of the U.S. government. This bill would provide \$2.5 million in additional federal funding to ensure that this investigative work continues.

The House Banking Committee created this Commission as part of our ongoing effort to help Holocaust victims and their families to recover their assets which were lost during the Holocaust. I believe we must ensure that the U.S. government has properly reimbursed these victims and their families for any assets which they may have received. For many of these victims, the search for truth has already taken too long and this report to Congress

may help to clear up one area of concern. In my district, there are many Holocaust victims and their families who would benefit from these recovered assets and who are seeking redress for past actions.

Just recently, the House Banking Committee held another hearing on Holocaust issues. At this hearing, the U.S. Department of Treasury Deputy Secretary Stuart Eizenstat, a member of this Commission, testified about the progress being made in securing information from government agencies. Treasury Deputy Secretary Eizenstat stated that the Commission recently released a map of the 75 total federal agencies which had some knowledge of Holocaust assets. This map shows how much information will have to be reviewed before a report to Congress can be completed and I believe that this legislation will help provide the necessary time and resources to meet this challenge. Deputy Secretary Eizenstat also strongly expressed the Clinton Administration's view that we should approve this legislation in a timely manner to ensure that the Commission's work continues without delay.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2401, legislation to ensure that the Holocaust Assets Commission completes its valuable investigation.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2401, legislation to extend the life of the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission and to authorize additional funds necessary for the Commission. I want to commend our colleague from New York, Mr. LAZIO, the author of this legislation, as well as Chairman of the Banking Committee, Congressman JIM LEACH of Iowa, who introduced the original legislation establishing the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission, which this body adopted in April of 1998.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is important and necessary. Because of delays that are normal in starting any new organization as well as the enormous amount of information that the Commission must review, the Commission requires another year to complete its tasks. This legislation provides an extension of time and authorizes the additional funding necessary for the Commission to complete its work.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues know well the horrors of the Holocaust—six million news brutally and systematically murdered, hundreds of thousands of others slaughtered because they were deemed "inferior" by the Nazis. What is less well known is that the Nazis, as part of this horrendous effort, also stole and looted billions of dollars of assets from many of these same victims. Over half a century after these atrocities were brought to an end, we still do not have a full accounting of these plundered assets.

Under the outstanding leadership of Deputy Secretary of Treasury, Stuart Eizenstat, the United States has been the leading nation in establishing which Holocaust-era assets may have been plundered and in establishing policies for dealing with such assets. I want to pay tribute to Ambassador Eizenstat for his careful and thoughtful attention to these issues.

Mr. Speaker, resolving the issue of Holocaust-era assets is a moral issue. This is a final opportunity to bring a small measure of justice to Holocaust survivors, who lost families and their way of life over half a century ago. These victims are getting older, and their

numbers are constantly diminishing. This is our last brief opportunity to help them.

I urge my colleagues to join in supporting this important legislation.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2401, The U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Extension Act of which I am a proud cosponsor. Last year Congress passed legislation creating the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States. The creation of the Commission made clear the Congress' belief that knowledge of the whereabouts of Holocaust assets in the possession of the U.S. Government should be documented and those assets should be dealt with in a just and prompt manner.

At a time when Holocaust survivors are aging and the U.S. Government is engaged in reparations negotiations on several fronts, we should certainly remain committed to a timely and thorough resolution of Holocaust assets issues in which the U.S. Government may be involved. H.R. 2401 will ensure that the President's Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States is given the time and resources necessary to complete its work. While a timely resolution is indeed of the utmost importance, it is reasonable to grant a year-long extension of the Commission. This one-year extension will facilitate a thorough and fair assessment of the United States' efforts to return Holocaust era assets of which our government is in possession.

While we are actively pursuing reparations internationally on behalf of Holocaust victims and survivors, we also need to look carefully at the role of the United States. The United States has been a strong leader on Holocaust claims issues. We should also set an example of what it means to conduct transparent self-evaluation.

Passage of H.R. 2401, and the subsequent extensions of the President's Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States, will allow the U.S. to continue to play a leadership role. Hopefully, in the year to come we will witness some measure of justice for Holocaust survivors and family members of Holocaust victims.

I commend the work the Commission has done to date as well as the sponsors of this legislation. I urge all members to vote in support of H.R. 2401.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Extension Act of 1999, which amends the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998 to extend the life of the Commission for one year and authorize it to receive \$2.5 million in additional funding.

I applaud Representatives RICK LAZIO, BENJAMIN GILMAN, JIM MALONEY and BRAD SHERMAN for their leadership on this issue. These four gentlemen are members of the Holocaust Assets Commission and original cosponsors of this important bill. In addition, Banking Committee Chairman JIM LEACH and Banking Committee Ranking Member JOHN LAFALCE are also original cosponsors of the bill.

Seventeen nations have established Holocaust historical commissions to investigate the extent to which the assets of victims of the Holocaust were handled, or mishandled, by their countries. As part of this effort Congress passed legislation last year creating the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States. H.R. 2401 extends

by one year (from December 31, 1999 to December 31, 2000) the deadline for the Commission to issue its final report to the President. The bill also authorizes the Commission to receive an additional \$2.5 million to cover expenses for the additional year.

Congress established the Holocaust Assets Commission (P.L. 105-186) last year to (1) study and develop a historical record of the collection and disposition of specified assets of Holocaust victims if they came into the possession or control of the federal government, including the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or any Federal Reserve bank, at any time after January 30, 1933; (2) coordinate its activities with those of private and governmental entities; (3) review research conducted by other entities regarding such assets in the U.S.; and (4) report its recommendations to the President.

Members of the Holocaust Assets Commission were named only last November, and the Commission began its work just ten months ago. The Commission requested an additional year to complete its work due to the unexpected volume and complexity of the material it needs to examine.

The effort to create the Holocaust Assets Commission last year was a bipartisan one, and the effort to extend its life has been as well. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAZIO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2401.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2401, the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

CONCERNING PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1794) concerning the participation of Taiwan in the World Health Organization (WHO), as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1794

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONCERNING THE PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO).

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Good health is a basic right for every citizen of the world and access to the highest standards of health information and services is necessary to help guarantee this right.

(2) Direct and unobstructed participation in international health cooperation forums and programs is therefore crucial, especially with today's greater potential for the cross-border spread of various infectious diseases such as AIDS.

(3) The World Health Organization (WHO) set forth in the first chapter of its charter the objective of attaining the highest possible level of health for all people.

(4) In 1977, the World Health Organization established "Health For All By The Year 2000" as its overriding priority and reaffirmed that central vision with the initiation of its "Health For All" renewal process in 1995.

(5) Taiwan's population of 21,000,000 people is larger than that of 3/4 of the member states already in the World Health Organization.

(6) Taiwan's achievements in the field of health are substantial, including one of the highest life expectancy levels in Asia, maternal and infant mortality rates comparable to those of western countries, the eradication of such infectious diseases as cholera, smallpox, and the plague, and the first to be rid of polio and provide children with free hepatitis B vaccinations.

(7) The World Health Organization was unable to assist Taiwan with an outbreak of enterovirus 71 which killed 70 Taiwanese children and infected more than 1,100 Taiwanese children in 1998.

(8) In recent years Taiwan has expressed a willingness to assist financially or technically in WHO-supported international aid and health activities, but has ultimately been unable to render such assistance.

(9) The World Health Organization allows observers to participate in the activities of the organization.

(10) The United States, in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review, declared its intention to support Taiwan's participation in appropriate international organizations.

(11) In light of all of the benefits that Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization could bring to the state of health not only in Taiwan, but also regionally and globally, Taiwan and its 21,000,000 people should have appropriate and meaningful participation in the World Health Organization.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than January 1, 2000, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the Congress on the efforts of the Secretary to fulfill the commitment made in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review to more actively support Taiwan's participation in international organizations, in particular the World Health Organization (WHO).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER).

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this Member rises in support of H.R. 1794, a resolution calling for Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization, WHO. This is a bipartisan resolution, Mr. Speaker, which was approved unanimously by the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific of the Committee on International Relations on June 23, 1999. This Member congratulates the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr.